

First State Tourism Update

The Tourism Industry Newsletter from the
Delaware Economic Development Office

Letter from the Delaware Tourism Office



It has been an exciting six weeks on the job as the director of Tourism! Thanks to my many years of sales experience and your overwhelming support, I've been able to hit the ground running. Here are just a few highlights I've been involved in already:

- Last month, I participated in the first-ever tourism disaster seminar. The all-day gathering featured experts from the U.S. Department of Homeland Security and the Naval Postgraduate School. We discussed evacuation plans in the event of a disaster.
- I met with the directors of each convention and visitors bureau and scheduled monthly meetings to ensure ongoing communication between our organizations.
- As a result of feedback from industry partners, I am helping to rewrite the Tourism Marketing Grant Program regulations.
- I am actively meeting with representatives of all of the large conventions and exhibit facilities statewide to identify opportunities to increase the meetings and special events business.
- I've already responded to several bids for sporting events, which would result in potential economic impact of more than \$1 million per event.
- I am soliciting business decision-makers to relocate their operations to Delaware, focusing on the state's many competitive advantages.

These are just a few highlights, but there will be more to share in the months ahead. My goals include attracting new tourism-related businesses to Delaware, identifying opportunities to grow existing businesses through new product offerings, and modernizing training programs to meet the objectives of tourism employers in the state.

I believe in open and transparent communication between partners. Your input and suggestions are always welcome. I am looking forward to meeting those of you I do not know and working together for a better tourism industry in the state. I hope to hear from you soon!

Sincerely,

Linda Parkowski

Fall 2008

First Sight



The Birkenhead Mills, one of the most beautiful views along the Brandywine at Hagley/ Photo courtesy of Hagley Museum and Library. For more information about the attraction and fall events, visit www.hagley.org.

We want your photos of Delaware! Upload your photos to the official Web site of the Delaware Tourism Office at: www.visitdelaware.com/photo_submissions.htm. We'll select one "First Sight" to feature in every e-newsletter. We might even use the images submitted with photo credit in the 2009-2011 Official State Travel Guide and for other tourism promotions.

First Step

DTO will not be attending any tradeshows this quarter.

Details about DTO co-op advertising opportunities will be available next week. Media outlets will include the *Great Vacation Getaways* newspaper inserts, *Southern Living* magazine, *History Channel Magazine* and the *New York Times* "Great Getaways" e-mail blast.

Contact Adam Berger, marketing coordinator, for more information at adam.berger@state.de.us.

First Word

Did you hear the word? Here are just a few stories published in regional and national media outlets during the previous quarter (July 1 to Sept. 30):

Taking Flight: Delaware is for the Birds; *Trips & Getaways*, Summer

Return to Nature in Delaware; *Gallagher's Travels*, Summer

Dial-a-Bird, *Perceptive Travel*, July

The Beach Offseason; *The Patriot-News*, Harrisburg, July 13

Romance and Relaxation; *Eastern Home & Travel*, July/August

Meet Your Neighbors; *The Two River Times*, Aug. 15

Quick Escape: Rehoboth Beach; *Main Line Today*, August

The Delaware Shore; *Richmond Times-Dispatch*, August



One Tank Trips: Rehoboth Beach; *FOX 29 Good Day Philadelphia*, Aug. 21

Return to Nature in Delaware; *Gallagher's Travels*, Summer

First Impression

In every newsletter, you have the chance to recognize an exceptional tourism professional, someone making a behind-the-scenes difference in the industry. Nominate your interns, volunteers and staff members. This quarter, Kent County Tourism submitted the following tribute:

Every office needs glue, and I don't mean the sticky kind. At Kent County Tourism, Barbara Rafte is our glue. Barbara's title, Assistant to the Director, is truly a misnomer because Barbara, with her 12 years of tourism experience with our organization, is a true tourism veteran.

Barbara joined the bureau in 1996 as the organization's second employee. Since that time, she's seen others come and go including the retirement of Mary Skelton, Kent

County's first tourism director, who led the organization to where it is today – with Barbara's assistance.

Whether it's lining up itineraries for motorcoach tours, answering visitors' questions, assisting with brochure development, registering cyclists for the bureau's annual bike tour, Barbara is the glue that holds the operation together. She is customer-service focused, going the extra mile whenever necessary. For example, just recently, she found herself researching "rivers in Kent County which to baptize a church congregation" for an upstate New York church group.

In recent months, Barbara took on the challenge of helping to expand the 75th anniversary of Old Dover Days. The traditional one-day event morphed into a three-day event and expanded to include a much-requested house and garden tour along with a tea party.

That may sound like an easy task; however, a house tour had not been a part of the event in more than a decade. Barbara literally spent hours contacting homeowners around Dover and Camden, and making presentations to businesses and organizations in an effort to obtain buy-in for the project. For months, it was slow-going. However, by the day of the big event, we had obtained 17 sites for the house tour, something our visitors had been requesting for several years. Barbara made the success of the event her personal passion and it showed, as the streets of Dover

and Camden were filled that day with visitors enjoying the tour.

We are all fortunate to have some "glue" in our professional and personal lives. Kent County Tourism – and our visitors – are fortunate to have Barbara Rafte – our "industrial strength" glue.

Submit your brief nomination with a headshot photo to Public Relations Specialist Nikki Boone at nikki.boone@state.de.us

First Look



The Marketing and Communications Unit creates DTO's advertisements in-house. This Web advertisement is posted on Philly.com this month, which will deliver approx. 320,000 impressions. It is also posted on WashingtonPost.com through the end of November, delivering 1.68 million impressions within a Mid-Atlantic geo-targeted market. The ads link directly to www.VisitDelaware.com.

For the complete fiscal year 2008 advertising schedule, visit dedo.delaware.gov/Tourism.shtml.

Delaware Firm Selected to Produce 2009-2011 State Travel Guide

Trellist Marketing and Technology has been awarded a contract to produce the 2009-2011 Official State Delaware Travel Guide. Trellist, a marketing and technology professional services firm located in downtown Wilmington, was selected via a Request for Proposal process. The publication will be easier for visitors to use in planning their trip, and while they're traveling in Delaware. It will contain fresh editorial and many new opportunities for advertisers. Additionally, Trellist will develop an interactive online guide to reach prospective visitors who use the Internet for their travel planning.

"The Official State Travel Guide is an important marketing tool for the state of Delaware. In partnering with Trellist on this project, we'll be able to take advantage of the firm's design, marketing and technical expertise, which will deliver a new strategic vision for the guide." – Dina Reider-Hicks, director of Marketing and Communications

A new 5 by 8-inch format, similar in size to a Zagat's or the Michelin Guide series, will also make the publication more portable for visitors on the go. The guide will offer a portable snapshot of Delaware, attractions, dining, accommodations and shopping venues.

The guide will be distributed nationally and internationally through DTO's fulfillment center, visitor information centers, convention and visitors bureaus, industry partners and by office staff at media and trade shows. All Delaware tourism-related businesses are invited to submit listings to the travel guide, free of charge, at www.delawareadvertising2009.com.

Reach More Visitors than Ever!

We're excited to announce the availability of advertising space in the 2009-2011 Official State Travel Guide for Delaware. This biennial guide, to be distributed beginning early next year, offers advertisers several new features:

- A new 5 by 8-inch page format will be easier for travelers to carry and use as a reference, with full to 1/16 pages available
- Editorial focus on variety of itineraries and longer visits to Delaware
- A reader service card to generate leads complete with names, addresses and e-mails (only available to advertisers)
- Our interactive Web travel guide will expose all print guide advertisers FREE for six months! Paid Web ad units at standard sizes are available as well.

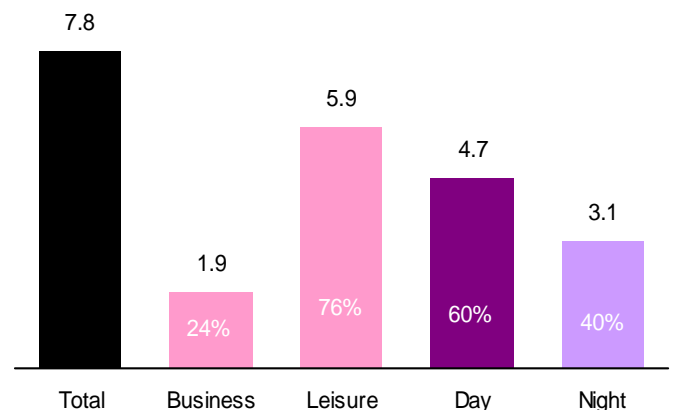
Uncertain economic conditions make it more important than ever to produce a return on investment. Don't miss your opportunity for two years of continuous exposure to Delaware's potential visitors.

For more information, contact Heather Makatche at hmakatche@trellist.com or 302-442-6147.

New Visitor Statistics Available

The 2007 Visitor Profile, prepared by D.K. Shifflet & Associates, Ltd., is now posted online. The report is a comprehensive analysis of the travel market in the U.S. and Delaware. Here are a few highlights from the report:

- The total number of person-trips to Delaware dropped by 3 percent to 7.8 million in 2007, down from 8.1 million in 2006 and 8.07 million in 2005.



(cont.)

- The majority of visitors (48 percent) to Delaware are taking day trips. Those staying between two and three nights account for 24 percent of visitor volume, nearly 10 percent greater than those staying only one night. Only a few (3 percent) stay for a period greater than 8 nights.
- Those taking day trips to Delaware spent about \$200 per trip in 2007. As the length of the trips increased, so did the total dollars spent during the trip. Those staying 4-7 nights spent the highest or nearly \$1,500 throughout the trip.
- More than half of Delaware leisure trips originate from the South Atlantic division (59.6 percent). Trips originate throughout the country, but an additional one-third arrive from the Middle Atlantic division (33.6 percent)
- The top ten markets account for 89.9 percent of all Delaware visitors. These markets include:
 1. Philadelphia, Pa.
 2. Washington, D.C.
 3. Baltimore, Md.
 4. New York, N.Y.
 5. Salisbury, Md.
 6. Norfolk-Portsmouth-Newport News, Va.
 7. Buffalo, N.Y.
 8. Savannah, Ga.
 9. Harrisburg-Lancaster-Lebanon-York, Pa.
 10. Tampa-St. Petersburg, Fla.
- The demographics of visitors to Delaware closely mirror that of the average U.S. domestic traveler. Those traveling to Delaware have an average household income of more than \$72,000, are 50 years of age and spend \$116 per trip.
- Among the activities in which visitors participated during the trip, participation rates for dining, shopping, entertainment, gambling and beach activities were the highest.

To view the 2007 Visitor Profile full report, visit <http://dedo.delaware.gov/information/statistics.shtml>.

Bellmoor Inn and Spa Recognized as Delaware Green Lodging Hotel

The Bellmoor Inn and Spa of Rehoboth Beach was recognized earlier this month as the first hotel in Sussex County to receive Delaware Green Lodging certification. The Bellmoor joins five other Green Lodging hotels in New Castle and Kent counties – the Clarion Hotel - The Belle in New Castle, Courtyard Newark at the University of Delaware, the Hilton Wilmington Christiana in Newark, Mainstay Suites in Dover, and the Quality Inn & Suites - Skyways in New Castle.

“More travelers are selectively seeking green hotels. It’s wonderful to have the Bellmoor added to the growing list of Delaware Green Lodging properties. We hope that this will pave the way for more Sussex County hotels to join the program.”
- Scott Thomas, director of Southern Delaware Tourism

The Delaware Green Lodging Program is a voluntary, self-certifying program that encourages hotels, resorts and other hospitality facilities to understand their impacts to the environment and implement pollution prevention practices. Facilities that meet Delaware Green Lodging requirements receive a certificate and window decals and can display the Delaware Green Lodging logo on marketing materials. Green Lodging hotels are listed on the program Web site and are eligible to participate in grant opportunities.

In addition, Green Lodging hotels will be designated with an “environmentally friendly” symbol in the Official State Travel Guide, to be published by the end of January 2009.

DNREC’s Web site includes an overview of the Delaware Green Lodging program, the checklist businesses need to complete to qualify and other information. A list of participating businesses and environmentally-friendly practices implemented is also included. Visit www.dnrec.delaware.gov/p2/Pages/GreenLodging.aspx

Update your Contact Information

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